

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## When a Dancer Designs to Dance

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, June 19th, 2019

Redacted dance downtown, South Asian dance in Venice, ocean oriented dance in Santa Monica, shared costumes in Brentwood, Celtic dance in Hollywood, first look at new works in Ladera Heights and Lincoln Heights, and more SoCal dance this week.

### 5. Beach Dances

It's been a week to dance by the seaside as *Beach Dances: Shared Practice* offered open rehearsals and workshops exploring the practice and creation of dance in daily beach life. Two days of performances wrap things up with participating local choreographers including Heyward Bracey & Nguyen Nguyen, Paola Escobar, Maya Gingery, Rebeca Hernandez, DaEun Jung, Shaina Lynn & Isabel Ivey, Carol McDowell, alexx shilling and Christine Suarez. Saturday features choreography while Sunday is an improvised "Encounter" organized by Mariel Carranza. Allison Wyper of Rhizomatic Arts curated this year's program. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Hwy., Santa Monica; Sat., June 22, 6:30 p.m., Sun., June 23, 5 p.m., [free with reservation](#).



Beach Dances: Shared Practice. Photo by Andrew Mandinach.

### 4. Dancing on new ground

The latest installment of *Terra Nova*, an invited showing of new works mentored by choreographer Rosanna Gamson brings dance from Amelia Charter, Thomas Davis, Alysha Higgins, Dion Pratt, Felicia St. Cyr, Cecilia Slongo, Sadie Yarrington and Lyndsi Zapata. Miranda Wright and Mallory Fabian will moderate the showing and discussion. This endeavor has proved to be an intriguing incubator for new and experienced choreographers to initiate work that goes on to full development. In an earlier *Terra Nova*, Invertigo Theater's Laura Karlin developed an initial section of what has become *Formulae and Fairy Tales* that will be presented in full by the Broad Stage this fall. Invitation requests for *Terra Nova* at the website. Crenshaw Yoga & Dance, 5426 Crenshaw Blvd., Ladera Heights; Sun., June 23, 3 p.m., \$10. <http://www.rosannagamsonworldwide.org/projects#/terranova>.



2018 Terra Nova. Photo courtesy of Rosanna Gamson/WorldWide.

### 3. Something old, something new

Traditional and contemporary share the stage as choreographer Malathi Iyengar and her **Rangoli**

**Dance Company** present Bharatanatyam dance from India under the banner *Viriboni* (flower-like beauty). Scheduled works include *Bhairavi Tana Varnam*, a celebrated composition by 18<sup>th</sup> century composer Pachimiriyam Adiyappayya. Dancers include Anita Anand, Shivani Aysola, Vyshnavi Aysola, Ritika Iyer, Amiya Prasad, Anya Prasad, Dhruv Sumathi, Nishitha Viswanathan, and Anshu Voruganti. The theme of merging cultures is also the subject of Judith Teitelman's novel *Guesthouse for Ganesha* from which the author will read selections. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice; Sat. June 22, 8 p.m., \$22-\$45.



Rangoli Dance Company. Photo by Gene Lewis.

## 2. SHIFT-ing into a new gear

Works produced during a three week **SHIFT/west** choreographic residency receive a first viewing then a discussion with the dancemakers. The choreographers are Jason Vu, Ally Pawlowski, Brian Golden, Lenin Fernandez, Jr, Boroka Nagy, Brynn Bodair and Sarah Stanely. The semi-annual SHIFT/west residency offers mentoring, studio time, arts administration, production training, professional development and in between, new dance is born. Brockus Project Studios, 618 B Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Fri.-Sat., June 21-22, 8 p.m., Sun., June 23, 6 p.m., \$15. [http://www.brockusproject.org/brockusproject.org/SHIFT\\_-\\_residency.html](http://www.brockusproject.org/brockusproject.org/SHIFT_-_residency.html).



SHIFT/west's Jason Vu. Photo courtesy of the artist.

## 1. Teaching old costumes new tricks

Although perhaps best known for the topless swimsuit and championing androgynous fashion, Rudi Gernreich spent a decade as a dancer, dance teacher, and costume designer with L.A.'s legendary Lester Horton Dance Theater. Horton's inclusive company welcomed Alvin Ailey (who later left for New York, but that's another story) and gay men like Gernreich and where he met Horton's muse Bella Lewitzky. Despite sounding a bit like the "begats" part of the book of Genesis, Gernreich's time as dancer cemented his concept of freedom of movement in fashion and also forged his friendship with Lewitzky that decades later led to multiple collaborations, the most famous of which was the "duotard", a stretchy, black or bright red costume inhabited by two dancers for Lewitzky's *Inscape*. In a special performance, **Luminario Ballet** performs three sections from Lewitzky's *Inscape* along with Lewitzky's *Turf*, also with Gernreich costumes and with the dancers coached by John Pennington, a respected Lewitzky alum. The 3 p.m. show is a shortened, family friendly version, free with museum admission. The longer evening show is ticketed. That duotard as well as that iconic "monokini" (a.k.a. topless swimsuit) and many more Gernreich designs are part of a current exhibit exploring the Gernreich fashion legacy. Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Brentwood; Sun., June 23, 3 p.m., free with admission, 6 p.m., \$15. <https://www.skirball.org/calendar/2019-06-23?tid=4>.



Luminario Ballet in "Inscape". Photo by Ted Soqui.

### *Other dance of note:*

The contemporary troupe **MashUp** brings a preview of the its full-length *Unravel* to the block party kicking off the 9<sup>th</sup> annual LA Design Festival. Enjoy the dancing, plus live music, desserts

and drinks. Details on festival events at the ticket website. The full version of *Unravel* is scheduled for later this summer. The Row DTLA, 777 Alameda St., downtown; Fri., June 21, 8 p.m., \$20. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/design-block-party-tickets-60089201419>.



MashUp. Photo courtesy of the artists.

In her new work *Redactions*, choreographer **Abigail Levine** explores whether the mark of the times is unspoken, possibly unspeakable acts that are more or less successfully covered up or covered over. Levine's latest is presented as an in-progress showing as part of her LA Performance Practice residency. Automata, 504 Chung King Ct., downtown; Sat., June 22, 6 p.m., free, reservations recommended. <https://www.artful.ly/store/events/18150>.



Abigail Levine. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Warm summer nights mean it is time to dance under the stars with **Dance Downtown**. From now until September, the series affords different ways to move on Friday nights. Free beginner dance lessons at 7 p.m. are followed by a chance to dance or to just watch and enjoy until 11 p.m. This summer's dance styles start with Bollywood this week, and later moves to disco, salsa, line dance, and two new additions Bachata and Motown/Funk. With the Music Center Plaza still closed off for renovation, the action continues at nearby Grand Park, but moves around later on. Each week's dance style and specific location at <https://www.musiccenter.org/tickets/events-by-the-music-center/danceDTLA/>. Grand Park, 200 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Fri., June 21, 7 p.m., free. <https://www.musiccenter.org>.



Dance Downtown. Photo by Javier Guillen.

A cabaret event from **Los Angeles Cuban Ballet** promises to blend ballet and opera with burlesque. The company and the event are new iterations of what was known as Blankenship Ballet of Venice a few years back. Monk Space, 4414 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Hollywood; Sat., June 22, 9 p.m., \$20 at door. <https://lacubanballet.com/>.



LA Cuban Ballet's Bertha Suarez Blankenship. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Summer's *JAM Sessions* continue with jig steps drawn from traditional Irish social dances taught by members of **CnaG Gaelic League of LA's** dance division *Céilí Rua* (Wild Gathering). The Ploughboys provide live music for the dancing. Come prepared to dance or to enjoy those who are doing the dancing. This Monday summer series offers an array of free dance classes that take participants around the world without leaving town. Find the full line up at <https://www.fordtheatres.org/>. Ford Theatres, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood; Mon., June 24, 7 p.m., Free (reservations strongly recommended).



JAM Sessions: Celtic. Photo courtesy of Ford Theatres.

Always bringing a bit of Stephen King style horror to the dance world, choreographer Alex Floyd and **OdDancity** offers *Unihiekka...sleep sand* considering the horrors embedded in lullabies. A small audience will be guided through this distinctive perspective on motherhood. PAM, 5810-1/2

N. Figueroa, Highland Park; Tues., thru June 25, 8:30 p.m., \$50. Contact through their facebook page or PayPal.

Hoofers rejoice! The tap-filled musical *Dames at Sea* is midway through its four week run. Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Fri.-Sat., June 21-22 & 28-29, 8 p.m., Sun., June 23 & 30, 2 p.m., \$45, \$40 senior, \$25 21 & under. <http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org/>.



Dames at Sea. Photo by Joshua Finkel.

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